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Advanced Dungeons & Dragons
2nd Edition

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DragonLance®

Official Game
Adventure

New Beginnings

BY MARK ACRES

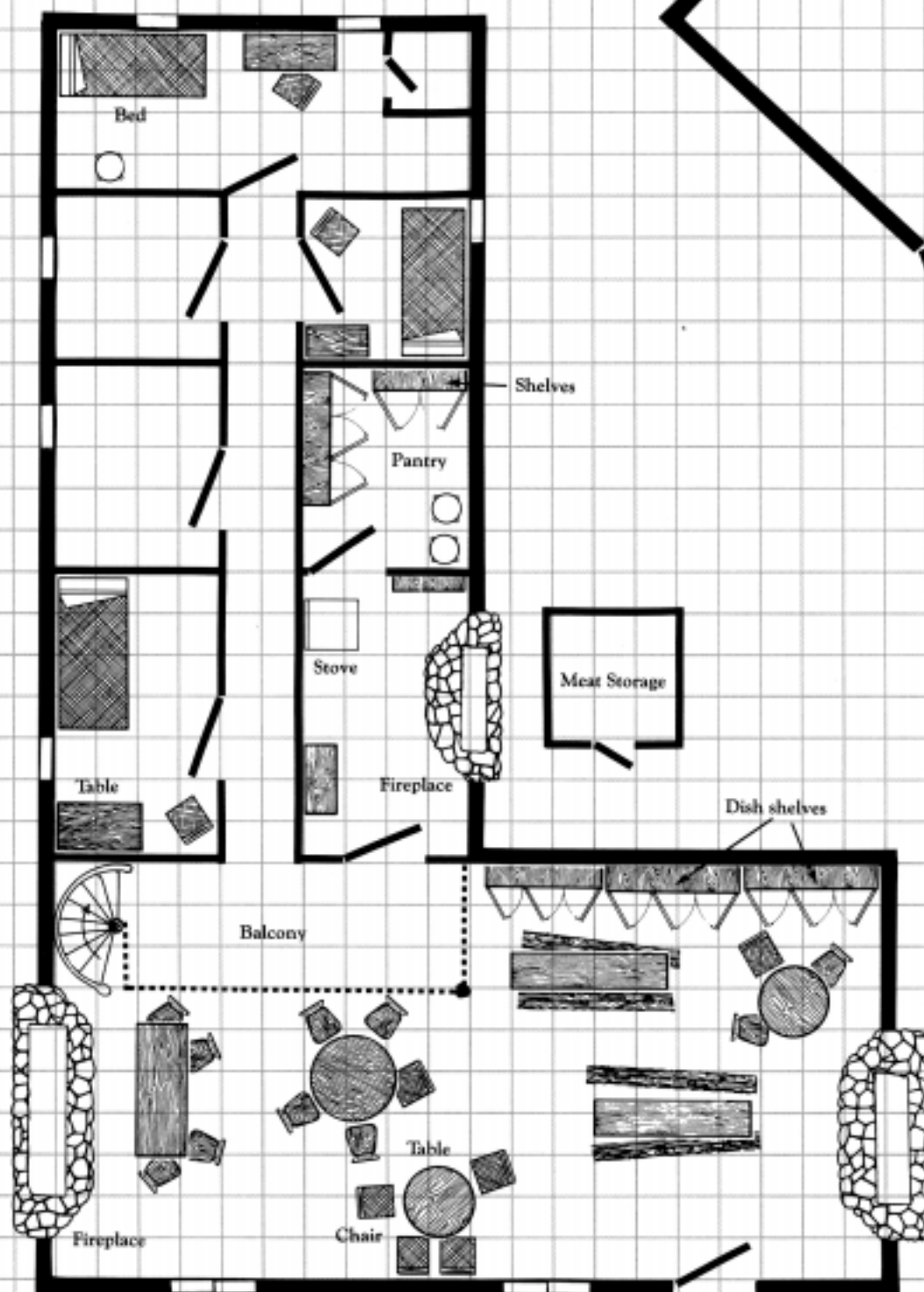


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Advanced Dungeons & Dragons[®]
2nd Edition

DragonLance[®]

Official Game
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NEW BEGINNINGS



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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to a challenging new realm of fantasy adventuring on the continent of Taladas in the DRAGONLANCE® campaign world of Krynn!

New Beginnings is specially designed to help new players of the AD&D® 2nd Edition game begin campaign play in Taladas. However, even experienced Dungeon Masters should realize that starting any new campaign, especially with beginning players, is a challenging task indeed.

The players must assimilate a great deal of material in a relatively short period of time, and unless that material is presented in a clear, organized fashion, new players may become discouraged. Using *New Beginnings*, DMs will find they can get new players started quicker, and with far less frustration than would otherwise be the case.

Experienced players and DMs should find that this module can still be quite helpful as they move their campaigns from other settings into Taladas, where many things, including some game rules, are different from the established norm.

HOW TO USE THIS MODULE

Because *New Beginnings* helps players begin campaign play on the newly-described continent of Taladas, it is assumed that readers of this material already own the *Time of the Dragons* boxed set which contains the Taladas campaign setting itself. Players who don't have the boxed set will need to hook up with a group adventuring in the Taladas setting in order to use this module.

Further, this module uses the AD&D 2nd Edition game rules. Players should have access to the AD&D 2nd Edition *Players' Handbook*, and DMs should have a copy of the AD&D 2nd Edition *Dungeon Master's Guide*. Finally, it is recommended, although not necessary, that the DM have access to the DRAGONLANCE *Adventures* hardcover book.

Most of the material in this module is for use by both players and DMs. All of the text **except that in the final chapter** may be read by players and DMs alike. The text in the final chapter, and the maps marked "DM's Map" are for the DM only.

New Beginnings is divided into five chapters. Chapter One helps new players to create a character for campaign play in the Taladas setting. It includes a step-by-step review of the character creation process, tips on choosing character races and classes for a Taladas campaign, and a new character sheet. Permission is granted for players to photocopy the new character sheet for personal use only. Experienced players may use Chapter

One without the aid of the DM to help them create a Taladas campaign character. The character must be approved by their DM for use in his or her game, however. New players should use Chapter One along with the DM to help them in the process of creating Taladas campaign characters.

Chapter Two outlines many helpful tips for beginning players. These include suggestions about how to make gaming sessions more fun for everyone involved. The chapter covers advice on such important topics as equipping the character, gathering information, and group tactics. Players may read this information for themselves, or DMs can share it with new players in an informal way.

Chapter Three helps new players "round out" their newly created character, by adding distinctive personality traits and personal goals for the character, and stresses the importance of good role playing. Like Chapter Two, it may be read by the players alone or discussed by a group.

Chapter Four presents a series of "What Would You Do?" encounters for individual characters within each character class. These encounters present typical situations that might normally confront a first level character on the continent of Taladas. Players decide what their character would do in each situation, and determine the outcome. Suggested courses of action and answers to relevant rules questions are printed in boxes so players can see how their own solutions measure up to those of more experienced players (and how well they conform to the rules of the game).

Chapter Four also contains an interesting "dry run" encounter for an entire party. This is designed to let players see how their different characters can interact to solve common problems and overcome common obstacles.

Lastly, Chapter Five contains a short capsule adventure that the DM can use to launch his or her Taladas campaign. The adventure has been designed so that the players can encounter many of the differing races, cultures, and religions that make Taladas unique and challenging.

ABBREVIATIONS

Throughout this book, standard abbreviations are used without further explanation. For example, "AC" means armor class, "hp" stands for hit points, and so on. All references to existing source materials are to the AD&D 2nd Edition books. Common abbreviations used are:

PHB = *Player's Handbook*

DMG = *Dungeon Master's Guide*

RBT = *The Rule Book to Taladas*

GBT = *The Guide Book to Taladas*

CHAPTER ONE: CREATING CHARACTERS

As a beginning player of the AD&D® game, you are about to become someone new! This new persona is the character you will create and role play throughout the campaign. This chapter explains, in a simple, step-by-step fashion, the best way to go about creating that character.

WHAT YOU NEED

In order to create a character, you will need the following things:

1. Scratch paper and pencils;
2. A set of gaming dice, including at least one 4-sided die (d4), one six-sided die (d6), one eight-sided die (d8), one ten-sided die (d10), and one twenty-sided die (d20);
3. A copy of the AD&D 2nd Edition *Player's Handbook*;
4. A copy of *The Rule Book to Taladas* from the *Time of the Dragons* boxed set;
5. A character sheet. It is strongly recommended that players photocopy both sides of the character sheet on pages 31 and 32 of this booklet for their personal use.

New players should create characters only with their DM's help and guidance. The DM needs the above materials, and a copy of the AD&D 2nd Edition *Dungeon Master's Guide*. A copy of *DRAGONLANCE® Adventures* is strongly recommended, although not strictly necessary.

BEFORE STARTING

Before beginning the character creation process, players must know which of the several methods for rolling basic ability scores their DM wants them to use. Be sure to clear the method to be used with the DM who will be running your Taladas campaign.

Throughout the process of creating a character, make all notations on the character sheet in *pencil*; almost everything you write will eventually need to be erased and altered as the character progresses through his or her life of adventure.

Make all calculations needed in the character creation process on scratch paper; enter only the *final results* on the character sheet.

Finally, it would be helpful to read through this entire chapter once before beginning.

CHARACTER CREATION

STEPS

1. Write or print your own name in the space on the character sheet marked "player."
2. Using the method approved by your DM, roll

dice to determine the character's six **ability scores**. Jot down the six ability scores on scratch paper. Don't enter them on the character sheet yet; they may be modified.

3. Choose the character's **race**. This is an extremely important decision. The choice is limited only by the minimum and maximum ability scores allowed for all races (humans are exempt from this restriction). Players should consult "Table 7: Racial Ability Requirements" in the PHB and "Racial Ability Requirements for New Races" in the RBT. Also, see "Choosing The Character's Race," below.

4. If the character is *nonhuman* (elf, dwarf, Bakali, etc.), consult "Table 8: Racial Ability Adjustments" in the PHB and "Racial Adjustments for New Races" in the RBT. Add or subtract the appropriate modifiers for each ability to the scores obtained in Step 2.

5. If the character has a *Strength* score of **18**, roll percentile dice to determine Strength bonus as explained in the PHB.

6. Enter the adjusted ability scores in the appropriate spaces on the character sheet.

7. Consult Tables 1-6 of the PHB. Enter the information relevant to each ability score in the spaces provided on the character sheet. For example, a character with a Strength of 9 would enter 35 for "Wgt Allow," 90 for "Max Press," and so on.

8. Enter the information on the character's special racial abilities and limitations in the spaces provided. Each entry should be a brief note to help the player remember the ability during play. For example, under "Racial Abilities" for a half-elf character, the following notes would be proper:

Resist sleep and charm-related spells, 30%.

Infravision, 60 feet.

Spot concealed door, 1 in 6.

Find concealed, 1 in 3.

Find secret door, 1 in 2.

Special racial abilities are summarized in the PHB and the RBT. Limitations include maximum obtainable experience levels in certain classes (available from the DM) and miscellaneous other restrictions in the race descriptions.

9. Choose the character's sex and enter this in the place provided on the character sheet.

10. Determine the character's age, height and weight and enter the information in the appropriate spaces on the character sheet. Consolidated age, height and weight tables are included at the end of this chapter. Do **not** determine the character's maximum age; this is for the DM alone to determine and know.

11. Consult the consolidated movement chart at the end of this chapter to determine the character's

base *movement number*. Enter this number in the space provide on the character sheet.

12. Choose the character's *class*. Nonhuman characters may be eligible to be *multi-classed*. Class options available to a character are restricted by the character's ability scores (Table 13, PHB) and race (as noted in the race description). Before choosing a character class, see "Choosing the Character's Class" below. When the choice is made, enter the information in the space provided on the character sheet.

13. Choose the character's *alignment*. See "Choosing the Character's Alignment" below. Enter the chosen alignment in the space provided.

14. Determine the character's *hit points*, as explained in the character class descriptions. Be sure to add any bonuses allowed for good Constitution scores.

15. Consult "Table 60: Character Saving Throws" of the PHB. Enter the numbers shown in the appropriate space on the character sheet. In the space next to each *saving throw* number, note any modifiers that might apply to some throws. For example, paladins gain a +2 to all saving throws, while dwarves receive a saving throw bonus based on their Constitution score.

16. Make notes in the spaces provided for any special abilities or limitations of the character's class. For example, a paladin character would have numerous notes under class abilities, such as:

Detect evil intent—60 feet.

+2 all saving throws.

Immune to disease.

These notes are for the player's own reference during play. In the class abilities space, players should also record their scores for such things as thieving abilities (for thief class characters), spheres of access (for priest class characters), moon of influence (for Taladan wizards), and so on.

17. Enter the character's *experience level* on the character sheet. All new characters begin at level one.

18. Enter "20" in the space for THAC0 on the character sheet.

19. Together with the DM, determine what, if any, *weapon proficiencies*, *secondary skills*, and *languages* the character knows. Enter these, along with the appropriate ability score modifiers in the space provided. (The DM must tell the players whether or not he is using the rules for proficiencies. He should also indicate to the players how he intends to handle the question of languages. The DM should consult the "Languages" chapter in the RBT in particular concerning this question.)

20. In cooperation with the DM, players whose characters can cast spells should determine what starting spells are available to them. Wizards should record these on a separate sheet of paper which will become their *spell book*. Priests should already have determined their *spheres of access* in earlier consultation with the DM.

21. Together with the DM, players should determine their starting available money, and record this amount under "Current Funds."





ADDITIONAL CHARACTER SHEET DATA

The back of the character sheet provides space to record equipment, weapons, armor, and magic items. The DM will determine how characters may equip themselves. Usually, DM's allow beginning characters to spend money from their starting funds to buy equipment at standard prices. Some DMs prefer to wait, and let equipping the character be a part of the first adventure. Certain Taladas characters have their starting equipment already specified for them.

The back of the character sheet also provides spaces to record the spells (if any) that a character currently has available. When the characters decide what spell or spells to have prepared for the first day's adventuring, they should be entered here, along with any pertinent data about the spell.

There is a space on the front of the character sheet to record attacks allowed per round. The DM should help the character fill in this space, based on class, level, and the type of proficiency rules (if any) being used.

CHOOSING THE CHARACTER'S RACE

The race chosen for a character is extremely important. Race can effect the character's choice of classes, advancement in the chosen class or classes, alignment, background and personality.

In the Taladas campaign, there are more races to choose from than those given in the standard AD&D® 2nd Edition rules, and even more than are included in the *DRAGONLANCE® Adventures* supplement!

The DM should carefully review with new players their various choices of race. Particular attention should be paid to giving players at least a brief summary of background information about the new PC races in Taladas. It is perfectly appropriate for the DM to state frankly that he or she has some preference for using or not using certain new PC races. For example, a DM could certainly tell the players that it will be more difficult to work an ogre or Bakali PC into the type of campaign he or she has planned. However, a good DM will certainly leave all options open to those players who want to try them.

For the player, the most important consideration in the choice of character race should not be game rules, mechanics, or even how relatively powerful a given race seems to be. As new players become more familiar with the game, they will see that the game rules balance out the various special abilities of the different races, so that no one race is really more powerful than any other.

Instead, the real questions a new player should

ask himself are these: How well can I play the role of a character of this race? How much fun will it be to pretend to be of this race? Would I enjoy taking the role of a Bakali, or an ogre, or a dwarf?

A common mistake that new players often fall into is devaluing humans. The nonhuman races generally have the ability to combine classes; for example, an elf can be a fighter/mage/thief all rolled into one. However, new players should realize that such multi-class characters tend to advance in level at a *much* slower pace than single-classed characters. Don't forget that while humans have no special abilities, they have no special limitations either, a fact that can become very important as the campaign begins to develop.

CHOOSING THE CHARACTER'S CLASS

Like race, character class is an important decision. It really boils down to this question: How will the character make his or her way in the world? If force of arms is the desired answer, the player should choose the warrior class. If the mysteries of magic are attractive, the player should choose the wizard class. The priest and rogue classes each have certain abilities that are very desirable as well.

Again, the basic question is which class will be more fun for the player to play. A player who thrills to combat will probably do poorly as a kender thief; a player who dreams of casting powerful magics would not be well suited for a warrior character.

In the Taladas campaign, however, there is much more to choosing character class than in other AD&D campaigns. The DM should take pains to make the players aware of the many different types of characters that can be found in each class in Taladas, as these are summarized in the player character kits provided in the RBT.

It is especially important for DMs to take note of the special rules that pertain to priests in the Taladas campaign. The DM should be familiar with the information on priests in the *DRAGONLANCE Adventures* book if possible, and most definitely with those rules outlined in the RBT. These new rules should be made available to all players who are even considering the priest class for their characters.

Players who intend to play together as part of a group might want to consider *group balance* in choosing their class as well. It is usually important to have the special capabilities of all four major classes represented in a party of adventurers. For example, a group of eight elven fighter/mage/thieves might suddenly find themselves in desperate need of a priest when confronted by a horde of undead, or even when deeply engaged in a serious battle. Magic is often needed to aid even the most



heroic fighter. The talents of a thief can turn the tide in many cases, and sometimes help avoid an unnecessary and costly fight. All the classes are equally important to the success of a group, and the success of the group is almost always important to the success (and survival) of the individual characters.

CHOOSING THE CHARACTER'S ALIGNMENT

Before players choose their characters' alignments, the DM should be certain that they understand that the moral alignment they choose may greatly effect their courses of action in the future.

While players are free to choose between a good, neutral, or evil moral alignment, the choice of an evil alignment is strongly discouraged. First of

all, it is much more difficult to be a successful evil character in a well run Taladas campaign. While there are certainly evil characters who thrive and prosper on the continent, all are governed by the basic law of Krynn—the law imposed by the High God. That is the Law of Consequence. While evil may be chosen, it is in the nature of evil to consume itself; *the consequences of evil will be visited on the character sooner or later.*

Players should not assume that their character's race automatically determines their alignment. In Taladas, there are ogres, goblins, minotaurs and many others who deviate from the natural tendency of their races toward evil. In some cases, this need not even impede their relations with similar beings. For example, a lawful good minotaur could champion the cause of justice (as he sees it) in the arena, and become a highly respected champion, even though the basic philosophy of minotaur society is rooted in lawful evil.

CONSOLIDATED HEIGHT AND WEIGHT TABLE

Race	Height in Inches		Weight in Pounds	
	Base*	Modifier	Base*	Modifier
Dwarf	43/41	1d10	130/105	4d10
Elf	55/50	1d10	90/70	3d10
Gnome	38/36	1d6	72/68	5d4
Half-elf	60/58	2d6	110/85	3d12
Kender	32/30	2d8	52/48	5d4
Human	60/59	2d10	140/100	6d10
Bakali	70/68	2d12	160/120	6d10
Goblin	40/38	2d8	74/70	4d4
Minotaur	84/82	2d6	180/170	15d10
Ogre	104/98	2d8	230/220	10d10

* Format is male/female

CONSOLIDATED AGE TABLE

Race	Starting Age		Maximum Age Range (Base + Variable)
	Base Age	Variable	
Dwarf	40	5d6	250 + 2d100
Elf	100	5d6	350 + 4d100
Gnome	60	3d12	200 + 3d100
Half-elf	15	1d6	125 + 3d20
Kender	20	3d4	100 + 1d100
Human	15	1d4	90 + 2d20
Bakali	14	1d6	100 + 5d10
Goblin	20	1d6	70 + 2d10
Minotaur	16	1d8	100 + 2d20
Ogre	25	1d10	50 + 4d20

CONSOLIDATED MOVEMENT TABLE

Race	Base Movement Rate
Human	12
Dwarf	6
Elf	12
Half-elf	12
Gnome	6
Kender	6
Bakali	9 (Swim 9)
Goblin	6
Minotaur	9
Ogre	9

CHAPTER TWO: TIPS FOR BEGINNING PLAYERS

Beginning players who are completely new to the *AD&D*® game may feel overwhelmed at first. This is only natural—it seems that there's a lot to learn. Rest assured that once you've played in a few gaming sessions, the rules will seem like second nature to you. However, there are several things you can do to make playing the game more fun. Some of these are game related; others are of a more social nature.

EQUIPPING YOUR CHARACTER

When it comes time to purchase the equipment for your first character, you will quickly discover that, just as in real life, you are on a limited budget—in most cases, a very limited budget. With so many goodies to choose from, how can you make the most of the few silver pieces you have? Here are some suggestions for each character class:

ALL PLAYERS

There are a few items that every PC should have, simply because they have so many uses in so many different situations.

Rope: Every PC needs a length of rope, at least 50 feet or more if it can be easily carried given your other gear. Rope has obvious value for climbing, but it can also be used to bind prisoners, string a way across an otherwise impassable chasm, set a trap for pursuers, lash logs together to make a raft, and probably a thousand other things that you won't realize until your next gaming session!

Dagger or Knife: Every PC (except those priests whose religions forbid its use) should have a dagger or at least a good, sharp knife. This is one of the few weapons that can be used when a foe is boxing or wrestling with you. A good knife can also be essential to survival in the wild. If nothing else, it gives you a good quick way to adjust the length of your rope!

Flint and Steel: Modern matches don't exist in the fantasy world of Taladas. Rubbing two sticks together may eventually give you a few

sparks to start your campfire, but it isn't very practical for use in combat. Fire has so many uses in a campaign that it is almost suicidal to be without a source of fire—especially for characters who lack *infravision*. Such characters will need some source of illumination. Lanterns are best, but expensive; a few torches or candles should always be packed along.

Pack, sack or bag: Whether its a finely made backpack or a gunny sack, every character needs something to put stuff in so he can carry it around without being badly encumbered.


Oil: At least one flask of oil is highly recommended. Nothing slows down a mob of pursuers like some oil poured over the floor of a corridor and set on fire.

Holy water: This is an absolute must for priests, as it is required for a *bless* spell. Other characters will find it extremely useful against the lower forms of undead (skeletons, zombies, and the like).

Food: DMs take a dim view of characters who don't think to eat. It always catches up with you.

Wineskin: Something for carrying water or





wine. Going without water is worse than going without food.

Iron spike or piton: An extremely versatile tool for traversing difficult terrain obstacles, especially when used in concert with a length of rope.

WARRIOR CLASS

Weapons: Don't overload. Weapons are expensive and their weight adds up quickly. Two or three good weapons is usually plenty. At least one missile weapon (spear, bow and arrow, sling, etc.) can be extremely useful.

Armor: Starting out, you can't afford the good stuff, so keep it simple. A shield is usually a cheap bonus to armor class, but don't be afraid to drop it if it gets in the way. Multi-classed characters and thieves must also be careful about the miscellaneous restrictions on them—such as no spell casting while wearing armor (except *elven chainmail*).

PRIEST CLASS

Weapons: Given the choice between more holy water or another weapon, *take the holy water* (you're much more effective with it).

Holy Symbols, mirrors, garlic: Can also be effective against the undead. Always try to display your holy symbol prominently, so you won't be fumbling for it when it comes time to dispel some threatening undead menace.

THIEF CLASS

Lockpicks: Don't forget to buy a set of thieves' tools when you first equip your character. There's nothing worse than not having the right tool to do an essential job.

Armor and weapons: Try to keep these at a minimum. Most all of your thieving abilities rely on being unencumbered.

WIZARDS

Armor and weapons: Don't bother. Duck into the shadows or behind some hulking warrior when a fight breaks out. Try to save as much money as you can. You'll need it when you get to higher levels for spells and magical items.

GATHERING INFORMATION

Some players think the AD&D® game is a combat game, pure and simple. While it's true that combat provides much of the thrill and excitement of the game, surviving combat makes the game even more fun. One way to increase the odds of survival is to gather information.

Before you rush right out to that first dungeon you hear about, ask some questions. What do the locals know about the area? What types of foes are you likely to encounter? What type of terrain will you have to cross to get to where you want to go? Who is that mysterious fellow at the next table listening to you as you question the innkeeper?

Many times the DM can be a gold mine of information—if the players think to ask. Other times, PCs must work harder to get necessary information. If you want to know what the enemy is up to, find people who are close to him. Do some favors, grease some palms, and vital tips will start flowing your way. Remember that in almost any organization or society, there is someone who will talk if given sufficient incentive.

GROUP TACTICS

Each group of player characters is unique, with personalities and character capabilities all its own. Thus, it is almost impossible lay down hard and fast rules for group tactics while adventuring. There are a few general points, nonetheless, that you may find helpful.

First, try to **protect the spell casters**. Sure, they may seem useless at times, but there's no replacing that timely *feather fall* or *cure light wounds* spell when you need it. At low experience levels, wizards are particularly vulnerable.

When travelling, whether outdoors or in dungeon environments, it's usually a good idea to arrange your walking order so that the spell casters are near the center of the group. This makes them harder to hit with missile fire and often protects them in the first round or two of melee. During this time, they can cast spells that may turn the tide of battle.

Another rule to live by is to **always post a guard**. Whether camping out, staying at an inn, or having supper with the king of Armach,

have someone on guard. Remember to always expect the unexpected.

Along the same lines, try always to develop some standard formations and procedures. This is particularly useful in dungeon environments. Before opening the door to an unknown room containing unknown dangers, have the party arranged so that someone can listen at the door, another can open it, while still others provide cover, and spell casters are ready to let fly their magics.

If you can help it, never waste time squabbling over petty matters: Many a first level party has been wiped out while arguing about who's going to get the left over copper piece from the treasure horde. DMs love to catch unwary characters with their chain mail down.

Lastly, when all else fails, **run away!** Unless being true to her alignment prevents your character's fleeing, it is almost always better to live to fight another day.

THE SOCIAL FACTOR

Gaming sessions are social events in the real world, as well as adventures in a fantasy world. Thoughtfulness for your fellow gamers will go a long way toward making the gaming session more fun for everyone. (It will also make the other players more willing to risk their characters' necks to save your character!)

Try to arrive on time. It is terribly annoying to have five or six characters all fixed up and ready to go adventuring, but feeling that they have to wait for the *wizard* to arrive.

Have the items you need with you. As a gamer, you will need pencils and paper. Having your own dice is a good idea; sets can purchased in most hobby stores at very reasonable prices. Having your own copy of the AD&D® 2nd Edition *Player's Handbook* and other gaming supplements is also extremely helpful; you won't have to interrupt the DM all the time with rules questions.

Try your best not to be a *rules lawyer*. No matter how carved in stone a rule may seem, no two DMs will run the same encounter the same way or interpret the same rule the same



way in all situations. Unless the DM has thrown the rule book away completely, try not to worry about the rules. The real fun of the game comes from the sense of drama, excitement, danger, and adventure, not from the game mechanics.

Try not to laugh too hard when the other fellow's character dies, and it's his own silly fault. Nobody likes to feel foolish. Next time, you may be the one who forgets to bring the holy water!

Encourage everyone to take an active role. When one or two players come to dominate a group, play can become stale; everything is always done in the same style and manner. Also, those who aren't participating probably aren't having much fun. Do what you can to encourage the more shy players to join in freely.

Last, but certainly not least, *don't take things too seriously*. Remember, it's only a game. Even when your beloved character dies—which may happen—remember that his or her funeral expenses will not be tax deductible in the real world. The purpose of the game is to have fun.

CHAPTER THREE: TIPS ON ROLE PLAYING

The AD&D® game is a role playing game. It isn't a board game, or a video game, which often derive their life from the rules or the components. Rather, the AD&D game derives its life, and its fun, from the interactions between the players and between the players and DM. The more each player can make his character seem like a living, memorable human being (or gnome, elf, dwarf, or whatever the case may be), the more fun the game will be for everyone.

PERSONALITY TRAITS

At this moment, your new character exists only on paper. As a player, your role in the game is to make this collection of numbers come to *life*. You do this by the way you make the character think, talk, and act.

It may seem that your choice of the character's race and class, along with his or her ability scores, would be enough to dictate what personality traits the character will have. Actually, this isn't the case at all. As is noted in the AD&D 2nd Edition *Player's Handbook*, two characters with identical scores, race, and class could have very, very different personalities.

Consider two warriors, both young human males. One might come from a background that has left him unsure of himself, and therefore eager (perhaps overeager) to prove himself. Such a character might be very careful not to appear to be afraid. This could be expressed in different ways. The unsure character might carry himself in a bold, arrogant way, swaggering, speaking his mind, perhaps becoming a bit of a bully. On the other hand, the unsure character might be a grim faced youth, always serious, always careful and methodical, yet always the first one into battle.

A statistical "twin" to this first young warrior might be a comical character—one who is deliberately full of bravado and bluster, not because he's unsure of himself, but simply because he and everyone else finds it amusing.

As you think about your own character, try to pick one or two definite personality traits and incorporate into your mental image of the

character. Here is a list of a few such traits; you will doubtless think of many more:

Grim

Methodical

Brooding

Cheerful, even in adversity

Zany sense of humor - a punster or joker

Intellectual - always learning and teaching

Elitist - thinks he's slightly better than others

Scrupulously honest

Well intentioned but easily led astray

Hedonistic - addicted to "creature comforts" like a warm bed, excellent food, etc.

Idealistic

Romantic

Courteous

Plagued by feelings of guilt

Taciturn - talks very little

Blabbermouth - talks all the time

Contemplative - likes to think things over, arrives at cool, clear-headed decisions

Impulsive - makes snap decisions and plunges blindly into action

Ruled by reason

Ruled by passions

Loves animals

Detests the outdoors

Lazy whenever possible

Vain about dress or appearance

Slovenly

Well, by now you get the idea. To start out, pick just one or two traits to emphasize as you act out the role of your character. Others will follow naturally.

CASTING AGAINST TYPE

"Casting against type" is a common expression used by film and stage directors. It means to fill a role with someone of a personality type contrary to that of the character. You can use this to create a highly interesting and often amusing personality for your AD&D game character as well.

Not all warriors need be brave and tough, nor all wizards wise and cultured. Try applying a personality contrary to the stereotypical norm of your character's class or race. A

rough, boisterous wizard might make for an interesting character, just as a squeamish dwarf warrior might make for an amusing one. Have fun with it, and try to be original.

EXPRESSING TRAITS

Personality traits are expressed in thought, word, and deed. In a role playing game, no one can know your character's thoughts unless you voice them or act them out. Through your character's words and deeds you let others know how his or her mind works.

LANGUAGE

Try to create a characteristic pattern of speech for your character. Consider how different, and yet completely accurate, both of the following statements are. See how much they convey about the personality of the speaker:

"Look! A couple of hobgoblins! Let's jump 'em!"

"Ahem, excuse me, good comrades. There appear to be two rather nasty looking brutes, hobgoblins, I should say, quite near to us. Might I suggest that we attack post haste?"

Notice that both of these characters are saying the same thing, but in extremely different ways. Those differences communicate more than just the intended information; they also tell us about the personality of the characters.

VOICE

Along with the actual words used, a character's voice can convey much about him. "Voice" refers to a combination of accent, pitch, and inflection. Is your character's voice high, medium, low, or downright guttural? How does he pronounce his vowels? Does he speak in short clips, a slow drawl, or a sing song? Pick a voice for your character, and try to stick with it. It will quickly become natural for you to use that voice whenever you're playing the character, and will greatly enhance the game.

GESTURES AND MANNERISMS

If it suits your character's personality, use your hands when speaking as your character.

Whatever gestures seem to coincide with her voice will help to define the character even more. Facial expression is important too. When your character is angry, does she turn red-faced and bluster? Or does she coldly, quietly, arch one eyebrow? Both can convey a lot about the type of person the character really is.

CHARACTER GOALS

Just like real people in real life, PCs should have goals that they strive for. Some obvious goals are imposed by the game system, such as staying alive and advancing in experience level. But these are merely *mechanical* goals—they don't tell us anything about the character.

A character's race and class will obviously have some influence on his goals, at least his professional goals. For example, it is natural for warriors to crave glory and great victories, for wizards to constantly search for a better spell, or for priests to wish to advance within their hierarchy—if there is one. In simpler game terms these might translate into a warrior's quest that for that perfect weapon, a mage's search for a particular artifact, or a



cleric's desire to erect a great temple to his or her god.

There can be other goals as well, that characters of any class could have. These might be as mundane as owning a quiet inn in the country or as grandiose as changing the political structure of a society. In any case, they are goals that are not confined to any one class or race.

Try to pick at least two, distinct, specific goals your character will strive for throughout her career as an adventurer. You might want to link your character's goals with the reason that he or she took up adventuring in the first place. After all, why would any sane person choose to risk his or her neck on a daily basis? For monetary gain alone? Perhaps; but doubtless there is more to the story than meets the eye.

NPCs

Players often need to be reminded that NPCs are people (at least most of the time), too! A good DM will bring some NPCs to life so vividly that the players will never forget them. But the DM can't do that for every farmer, merchant, pilgrim and hobgoblin the PCs run into—there are just too many.

Often, as beginning characters gain some money, they begin to hire NPCs to perform certain tasks or services for them. Eventually, there may be hired, mercenary NPCs joining the characters in their adventures. The DM should take careful measures to make sure the PCs treat the NPCs like "real" people, but the players need to help in this as well.

For example, a PC warrior who hires some mercenary soldiers can hardly expect them to be the ones to open every dungeon door! NPC hirelings and henchmen aren't cannon fodder to be blown away at the PC's discretion or whim. If they are treated that way, the PC may find himself with serious problems: abandoned at the crucial moment, facing the consequences of an alignment change, or even worse, unable to hire anyone in the future because his reputation has preceded him!



THE IMPORTANCE OF ROLE PLAYING

Once you have been involved in even one truly outstanding gaming session, you will understand that good role playing, actually taking on the role of the character, is the most important and the most fun element in any role playing game.

Good role playing is more important than the game rules. It is more important than victories or defeats. It is what makes the game fun. It is what makes some of the adventures that occur around the gaming table seem so real, so exciting, so funny, and so laden with pathos that you may still be remembering them and talking about them years into the future.

CHAPTER FOUR: WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

This chapter contains a sampling of encounters, or portions of encounters, designed for solo play. Players should use their newly created characters, fully equipped, to play these encounters.

Each encounter begins with a description of the basic situation faced by the player character. After this, you will find one or more questions pertaining to the encounter. The answers to these questions are boxed underneath the questions. Players should try to answer the questions, then compare their answers to those provided. In this way, new players have a chance to get familiar with both the rules of the game and the capabilities of their new characters.

The encounters are arranged in groups according to character class. The first group is for warriors, the second for wizards, and so on. Players should try the encounters in each group for which their character is equipped; for example, an elven fighter/mage/thief could try all of the encounters except those for priests. For additional practice, players can play all of the encounters, using the appropriate characters.

PCs are assumed to have all of their hit points and full equipment at the start of each of these encounters.

If played with a DM, these encounters can be embellished rather easily to add more life to the NPCs and a heightened sense of drama. However, in no way should these encounters actually count as part of the character's life. These are intended to be "dry runs," encounters that help new players learn to play.

At the end of this chapter is one encounter for a group of PCs. This encounter does require a DM, but it should still be considered a "dry run."

WARRIOR ENCOUNTERS

1. A STAND-UP FIGHT

Battle rages all around. To the left, right, rear and front, friendly forces are engaged in individual melees with ruthless Thenolite foes. For a brief moment, you find yourself unengaged, then, you see a Thenolite light infantry man raise his shield and spear.

"C'mon, then, dog!" he shouts at you.

The foe is only 10 feet away. He wears studded leather armor and a gleaming bronze helmet. He carries a large shield and a spear 9 feet long. On his belt, a longsword hangs in its scabbard.

Initial Questions:

A. What would you estimate this man's *armor class* to be? **B.** If your estimate is correct, what do you think you will need to roll to hit this foe (your THACO number)? **C.** If he hits you, how much *damage* will he probably do with his spear (ignoring any strength or other bonuses)? **D.** Using the standard initiative procedure, how would the DM determine who gets to attack first?

ANSWERS: Encounter 1

A. Armor class 6. Studded leather and shield is AC 6 according to "Table 46: Armor Class Ratings" in the PHB. Keep in mind that so far, this is just an estimate; no account has been taken yet of possible Dexterity or magic bonuses. Making an estimate is usually wise, but relying on its complete accuracy until more is known about the foe is not.

B. 14. The "to hit" number is calculated by subtracting the opponent's armor class from your own THACO, which at first level is 20. (20 - 6 = 14). Remember that your attack roll may be modified by a Strength bonus, and, in the case of elves using a short or long sword, an additional racial bonus of +1.

C. 1 to 6 points of damage (1d6) if you are a small or medium size (S-M) target. The weapons table in the PHB shows damage of 1d6 points for a spear that hits a medium size target. If you are of the minotaur or ogre race, you classify as a large (L) target. In this case, the spear will do 1-8 (1d8) points of damage.

D. The GM would have you roll 1d10, and he would roll 1d10 for the Thenolite. The low die roll wins the initiative and strikes first.

Once you've taken a stab at the questions, why not have a stab at the Thenolite? Here are the statistics you need to fight him:

Thenolite infantryman: AC 7; MV 12; HD 1; hp 5; THACO 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (spear); AL LE.

Fight a mock combat with the Thenolite. For purposes of this combat, ignore weapon specialization and proficiency rules, and use the standard initiative procedure. Don't do anything fancy; just have your character and the Thenolite beat on each other until one or the other is defeated. This ought to give you a pretty good feel for how the numbers work.

If you think you're comfortable with the basics, try these questions on for size:

E. Assume the DM is using the optional modifiers to initiative. What modifiers, if any, would apply to the Thenolite's initiative roll?

F. Assume the GM is using the optional

F: What happens if the PC suffers *multiple* poisonous bites from the spider?

ANSWERS: Encounter 2
E. The spider's attack is a bite; this counts as a piercing type attack against the PC's type of armor. The spider's armor is its natural defense, not an actual "armor," therefore no modifiers would apply to the PC's attacks against the spider.
F. The PC would get a separate saving throw each time the spider bites him. Failure of the first saving throw would have the stated effects. If multiple saving throws were failed, the DM would have some discretion in deciding the results. In this case, the poison is relatively weak; most DMs would probably decide that multiple bites would merely do the stated bite damage, the spider's poison adding no more damage in this melee.

3. DEATH OVER DISTANCE

To play this encounter, assume your character has the following equipment: one melee weapon of your choice, one long bow, (20 flight arrows), one carefully scored flask of oil equipped with rag wicks, and flint and steel. Assume your character is *proficient* with the longbow, but *not* a specialist.

You stand atop a low knoll in the midst of an open field. Ilquar goblin war cries choke the air all around you. Suddenly, four of the menacing creatures scramble toward you, wielding their gnarled spears. They are about 200 yards away. Remaining calm, you pluck an arrow from your quiver and take aim.

Goblins (4): AC 6; MV 6; HD 1-1; hp 5, 4, 4, 3; THACO 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (Spear); Morale 12; AL LE.

Initial Questions:

- What is the PC's "to hit" number with the first arrow shot? (Ignore weapon type vs. armor modifiers.)
- What modifiers apply to the attack roll for the first shot?
- How many shots is the PC allowed?
- What modifiers apply to any shots after the first?

ANSWERS: Encounter 3
A. The PC's "to hit" number is calculated normally. It is 14 (20-6 = 14).
B. In general, the following modifiers apply: a range modifier, any Dexterity modifier the PC is entitled to, and, if the PC is an elf, a +1 racial modifier.
The exact range modifier depends upon who has the initiative. If the goblins win the initiative, they move 60 yards closer before the PC's first shot; thus the range is 140 yards. If the PC wins initiative, she fires before the goblins' movement, and the range

ANSWERS: Encounter 3
E. A charge increases the charging character's movement by 50%, and gives the attacker a +2 bonus on the attack roll. However, the defender gains a -2 modifier to initiative, and the charging character suffers a +1 penalty to AC as well as losing his or her Dexterity bonus for AC. Don't forget, some weapons may be set to receive a charge and inflict double damage on a successful hit (see "Combat," PHB).

Now, play out the encounter again. This time, let your PC light and hurl her flask of oil at one of the charging goblins (if any live long enough to charge).

When you're done, take a shot at these questions:

- How far can the PC throw the flask of oil?
- What modifiers apply to the attack roll?
- What damage will the oil do if it hits?

ANSWERS: Encounter 3
F. A PC of normal strength can hurl a missile of 5 pounds or less up to 30 feet (not yards). If the PC has a strength of 18 or greater, the DM may decide to allow a greater range.

is 200 yards. Table 45: "Missile Weapon Ranges" in the PHB shows that medium range for a flight arrow is 140 yards; anything over 140 yards up to 210 yards is long range. Range modifiers are given on Table 51: "Combat Modifiers" (PHB). The long range modifier is -5; the medium range modifier is -2.
Note that a character with no Dexterity or racial modifiers will have a tough shot; the "to hit" number is 14. With a -5 modifier, the PC will have to roll a 19 or 20 to hit.
C. The PC is allowed 2 shots per round with a long bow, according to the rate of fire shown on the "Missile Weapon Ranges" chart (Table 45, PHB).
D. The same modifiers apply as to the first shot, but with one possible difference. If the PC won initiative, his first shot would be long range -5). His second shot would take place after the goblins moved, closing to within 140 yards, and thus would be at medium range with a -2 modifier.





G. No Strength bonus would apply, because this missile is not intended to do damage from impact, but rather from the effect of the fire. Any Dexterity bonus for missile attacks would apply. Range modifiers are -2 at 11 to 20 feet, and -5 at 21 to 30 feet. **H.** Oil usually takes two attacks to use; one to drench the target, the second to light the oil. In this case, using a flask carefully scored so it will break on impact, and fixing it with a wick, the PC has guaranteed that the liquid will burn as soon as the flask hits something. Flaming oil does damage of 2d6 points in the first round, and 1d6 points in the second as it continues to burn. There is no further effect—although careful players and DMs will note that fire can spread...

THIEF ENCOUNTERS

These encounters are specifically designed for thieves. Players whose characters are multi-classed should use primarily their thief characteristics when playing these encounters.

This series of encounters and questions is linked together to form a mini-adventure. Your thief PC has learned that a moderately well-off minotaur merchant in the great city of Kristophan has obtained a secret map. According to your PC's sources, this map shows the location of a long-lost tomb of one of the great rulers of ancient Aurim. Such a find could be worth riches beyond imagining!

In addition, this merchant is known to dabble in the

purchase and sale of the occasional minor magic item. Being that they have yet to begin their adventuring careers, your PC's party of adventurers is sorely lacking in magic items.

Lastly, the merchant is also well-known as one who corrupts local officials and deals in stolen goods; in fact, the map itself was probably stolen.

Thus, for the greater good of your comrades (and your purse), you have decided to try to steal the map (and any magic items you might come across) from the modest villa of the merchant Baldameris!

4. PREPARATION

You realize that such a major score perpetrated a villa in the New City section of Kristophan is an ambitious task for a first level thief.

In preparation, you casually "case" the villa during daylight hours. The house has a high, two-story outer wall with no windows and only one large gate. A strange type of mark, like some weird lettering, adorns this gate. An armed guard lets servants come and go through this, the only entrance. At times, the barking of a dog echoes from inside the interior courtyard.

Questions:

A. What further information might your PC want before attempting to burgle this villa?

B. Where might such information be found? How?

ANSWERS: Encounter 4

A. This question calls for a judgment on the player's part; it is not a question about the rules of the game. At the very least, your PC would probably want to know the regularity with which the local officers of the law, the Saiones, patrol near the villa.

Other helpful tidbits of information might include: How many guards are there? Is the dog a guard dog? What is the meaning of the strange writing on the gate? When, if ever, is the villa empty? Where does Baldameris hide his valuables? What is the interior floor plan of the villa? Players are encouraged to think of other information they might want in planning the break-in.

B. Saiones patrols can be watched over a period of time without attracting attention. Information about the interior of the house and the location of valuables might be obtained from a bribed servant, a disgruntled or drunken employee, even a rival merchant under the right circumstances. Spending time with some other thieves of the city will quickly reveal the meaning of the strange writing on the gate: Baldameris is paying "protection" money to one of the "upright men" or major gang leaders of Kristophan. The writing is the mark of this leader, showing that the house is under his protection.

As far as a time when the villa might be empty is concerned, it is common knowledge in Kristophan that even household servants are given the day off when major cases are to be tried in the imperial arena...

5. THE FIRST OBSTACLES

Arena day arrives. Baldameris, his family, and servants all leave the villa to attend to the bloody trials. They will almost certainly be gone until late in the evening. When night falls, and the Saiones patrol has just passed, you make your move. The first obstacle is the wall. It is a smooth, cracked masonry wall, slightly over 20 feet high. The gate is no better for climbing. To avoid attention, you have brought no rope.

Initial Questions:

- A. What is your PC's chance to successfully climb the wall?
- B. How fast can your PC climb the wall?

ANSWERS: Encounter 5

A. To calculate the character's chance to climb the wall, look first at the tables for thief-ing skills in the PHB. Table 26 gives the base score prior to the addition of up to 30 discretionary points. (As this addition was done when the character was generated, the base score should already be known.) Tables 27, 28, and 29 show additional modifiers for the thief's race, Dexterity, and any armor worn. Total the base, plus all these modifiers that apply. Finally, consult Table 66: "Climbing Modifiers." In this particular case, none of these modifiers apply (unless your PC foolishly brings everything he owns, in which case he will likely be heavily encumbered). Finally, add 10% if the PC has the *Mountaineering* proficiency (Table 65, in the PHB). The end result is the PC's chance to climb the wall.

B. As the surface is dry, smooth and cracked, the thief can climb it at two times his normal movement rate in feet. Thus, if his movement rate is 12, the thief can climb this wall in only one round! Climbing rates are given on Table 67 of the PHB. Note that thieves climb at double the rates shown on the table.

Go ahead and give the wall a try. Roll percentile dice. If the roll is greater than the percent chance to climb the wall, your PC fails; he simply isn't able to climb this wall. Otherwise, the climb succeeds in one round.

Assuming the climb is successful, your PC is now at the top of the wall. Peering into the courtyard, he sees the armed guard carelessly strolling about the garden, occasionally stopping to listen to the distant cheers of the arena crowd, sighing in his displeasure at having to be on duty this night, then

walking on. There is an entrance into the villa proper about 30 feet from your PC's position.

Stop for a moment and ask yourself these questions:

- C. What is the first thing your PC must do?
- D. Would it be better to try to sneak into the house, or sneak up behind the guard to attack him?

ANSWERS: Encounter 5

C. The PC has to get down from the top of the wall! DMs are frequently amazed and amused by the fact that, during actual play, players will forget the most obvious things. Getting down will require another climbing check to avoid a fall.

D. This is a judgment question. Most experienced players would try to sneak into the house while the guard isn't looking. It is seldom beneficial to start a fight when combat isn't necessary, especially at first level when hit points are still very low. An additional consideration is that there is still no sign of the dog. The creature might be just out of sight, in a position where it could quickly come to the guard's aid and surprise the PC. Also, if someone notices that the guard is not at his post (a patrolling Saione, for instance), he or she may suspect something is up.

Roll to see if the climb down the wall is successful. Failure not only means falling damage, but noise as well, which will certainly alert the guard. For purposes of this encounter, assume the roll was successful. Now, the thief must move silently to the door. Try these questions:

- E. What is your PC's chance to move silently?
- F. What happens if he doesn't?

ANSWERS: Encounter 5

E. The chance to move silently is calculated using Tables 26-29 from the PHB, the same tables that were used to calculate the chance for climbing. Remember that a thief moving silently moves at 1/3 his normal movement rate.

F. If the dice indicate failure to move silently, the thief has made some noise. In a very quiet, almost deserted neighborhood, at dusk, that noise will certainly attract the guard's attention. However, the guard might be surprised; the PC would not, as he clearly is aware of his potential enemy.

Now, roll to see if your thief makes his silent movement. If he fails, make a surprise roll for the guard. As soon as the round of surprise ends (assuming the guard is still alive!) the guard rushes to the attack, shouting for the Saiones as he does so. Play out the combat, simply to see how well your thief would fare, then go on to Encounter 6.

Guard, human (1): AC 5 (chainmail); MV 12; HD 1-1; hp 5; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (S-M) or 1d12 (L) (Longsword); THAC0 20; AL N.

6. MAKING THE PINCH

Inside the house, you move quickly to the room where a bribed servant girl suggested that Balda-meris might stash his valuables. It's a large room on the second floor of the villa with a balcony overlooking the courtyard. Several large, curved couches are scattered about the room, with small marble tables adjacent to them. The back wall, about 20 feet long, features marble shelves filled with all types of ceramics, small sculptures, and bric-a-brac. Carefully, you begin examining the items on the shelf. After about three minutes, you reach for a small statue and find that it slides slightly on its base. A panel in the wall slides open!

The doorway opens onto an extremely narrow, dark staircase. Descending cautiously, you reach a room beneath the floor level of the villa. Fortunately, you have flint and steel, and are able to light a candle you find on a small table in the room. The room is quite tiny, and, aside from the table and candle, contains nothing except a large wooden chest with iron bands. The chest is 3 feet long and stands about 2½ feet high.

The chest is locked.

Initial Questions:

- A. What is your thief's chance to pick the lock?
- B. What should your thief do after picking the lock?

ANSWERS: Encounter 6
A. The chance to pick the lock is given on the tables with other thieving scores and their modifiers in the PHB.
B. He should not open the chest yet! If Balda-meris has gone to this much trouble to hide the chest, it most likely has at least some type of small, mechanical trap. Your thief should check for traps.

Make the rolls to attempt to pick the lock. If successful, make the rolls to find traps. (Notice that in actual play, the DM would make the find traps roll, and simply tell the player whether or not the character found a trap.)

Of course, the chest is trapped. If you found the trap, your PC would know that as soon as the chest is opened, two tiny darts would spring out, upward, into the face or chest of the person opening the lid. The darts are probably poisoned. Now what?

C. Assume that your character made the rolls to pick the lock and then found the trap. Would it be best at this point to try to *remove* the trap?

D. If your character doesn't try to remove the trap, what might he do instead?

ANSWERS: Encounter 6
C. The answer depends on your character's score for finding and removing traps. If the percentage is very high, attempting to remove the trap might be okay.
D. Using a dagger or other tool, stand behind the chest and open it from there, letting the tiny darts fly harmlessly against the wall. There's no sense risking the trap springing on you as you try to remove it.

Opening the chest, your character indeed finds his or her heart's desire! There, neatly folded into a flat leather case, is the map! Also in the chest are several gemstones—two emeralds, five sapphires, and a diamond. Finally, there is a gold brooch, and a slender, tapered, white ivory rod about 15 inches long. In retrospect, think about these questions:

- E. What course of action would you have taken had your character not been able to pick the lock?
- F. What would have happened if your character failed to spot the trap?

ANSWERS: Encounter 6
E. A tough question! One choice would be to abandon the mission. The character was cunning and lucky enough to get this far; many would choose not to press their luck. A second option is to try to leave with the chest; however, this will certainly encumber the character, to say the least. The problem is not the chest's weight, but rather its bulk. It's not the kind of thing one can carry in one hand while climbing a wall! Another option (commonly exercised by those without thieving abilities) would be to try to hack through the wood of the chest, but this would take a great deal of time with the tools at hand. Perhaps the best option would be to get out, and try again another day—with an axe.
F. The character would have been hit by the poisoned darts upon opening the chest. The character would then have had to make a saving throw vs. poison, or suffer whatever ill effects this particular poison causes. There is a chance the poison would not have been fatal. However, at the very least, a nasty bout of nausea would certainly have made escaping from the villa extremely difficult.

7. ESCAPE?

His goods carefully stashed in a small bag worn on a strap across his or her shoulder, your PC thief snuffs out the candle and, attempting to move silently, climbs back up the narrow, steep stairs. Near the top of the stairs, he listens intently for any sound from the room above, but hears nothing. He passes back through the secret door, crosses to the marble shelves, and twists the small statue, once

again closing the door. He turns to leave the room and, 10 feet away, in the doorway, sees the guard walking toward him through the dimly lit corridor!

Roll 1d10 for both the guard and the thief! On a roll of 1-3, the party rolled for is surprised. If the thief is surprised, and the guard isn't, the guard moves to attack immediately (the guard gets one free melee round). Combat then proceeds by rounds, using the normal procedure. Play out the fight, then have a go at these questions:

A. Assume the thief is not surprised, but the guard is. What is the best course of action for the thief?

B. Assume neither character is surprised. What is the best course of action for the thief?

ANSWERS: Encounter 7

A. The thief has a full round to act. What is "best" depends on several factors. The thief has few hit points, and he can easily avoid combat by rushing to the balcony and starting to climb the wall into the courtyard below. On the other hand, killing the guard is of little consequence if the thief is willing to leave Kristophan quickly. If he plans to stay, both the saiones and one of the "upright men's," "gangs will be looking for him! Besides, attempting to murder this unwary man might be construed by a DM as an evil act. The final decision comes down to a question of alignment and calculated risk. A neutral thief with any good tendencies at all would do best to escape; an evil thief who feels lucky might choose to attack.

B. Similar considerations as in question A apply. The thief can still withdraw (as explained in the PHB, "Retreat") to the balcony and be ready to climb down it next turn. However, avoiding combat will certainly depend upon initiative. Unless alignment prevents it, the thief would probably be best advised to attack (although not necessarily to kill).

Play out the remainder of the action. If the thief gets away down the wall, he will probably escape; the gate can be opened from the inside, and the guard will have to run through the house to get back down to the courtyard level. The thief has sufficient time to get away. Ah, but...

C. Where's that *dog*?

ANSWERS: Encounter 7

C. It died this morning. Not even the most clever character can know and account for everything!

PRIEST ENCOUNTERS

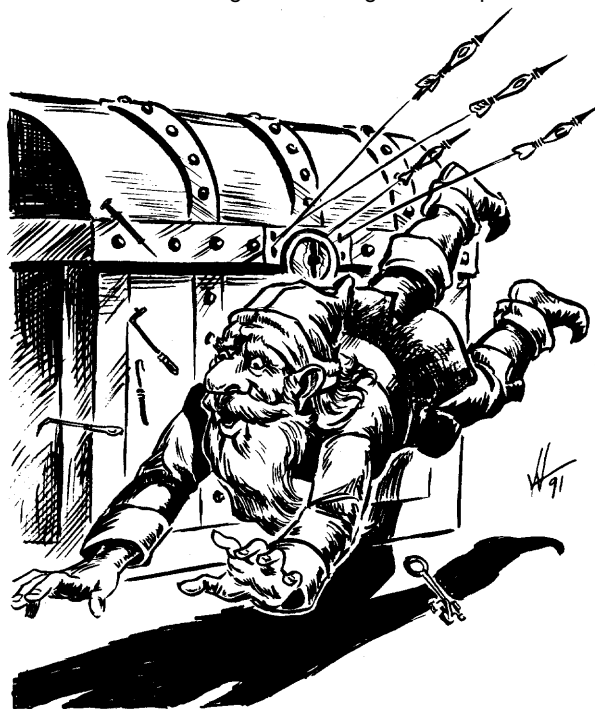
The following encounters assume that the player's character is a priest of good, or at least neutral, moral alignment. Evil priest PCs are to be strongly discouraged by the DM. The two encounters that follow will help players of priest PCs learn the basics of spell casting, turning undead, combat, and the strictures of alignment. These players will also benefit from trying out the warrior encounters above. Players of priest class characters will gain more experience later, when playing with a group. This is because many of the special things a priest can do, particularly at lower levels, are of great benefit to other, allied PCs.

In the following encounter, it is assumed the priest has a *bleed* spell prepared, in addition to any others he or she may be allowed.

8. CONFRONTATION WITH EVIL

Your PC has spent several days in the town of Jala in northern Armach, very quietly doing what good she could do. Word of your priest PC's presence has spread, however; and given current conditions, especially the growing popularity of the cult of Usa, you have deemed it best for your character to move on.

As your PC leaves Jala, walking alone down a crude trail, she sees in the distance, by the moonlight, a furtive, human-sized form. The hooded figure flits behind a low ridge at the edge of an open field.



Your priest proceeds, slowly and cautiously, keeping a careful eye on the area where this figure disappeared. At a distance of about 150 yards, the ridgetop is suddenly alive with movement. Against the backdrop of the pale moon, two disheveled human figures shamble forward awkwardly, flanked on each side by four other figures—skeletons!

"Bring me her heart!" The command rings out through the night air, and the skeletons deftly start forward. The disheveled figures struggle to follow and keep up.

Skeletons (8): AC 7; MV 12; HD 1; hp 7, 7, 6, 4, 4, 3, 3, 1; THACO 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; AL N; Size M. Not affected by sleep, charm and cold-based spells. Holy water causes 2-8 points damage.

Zombies (2): AC 8; MV 6; HD 2; hp 7, 9; THACO 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; AL N; Size M. *Sleep, charm, hold* and cold-based spells have no effect. Always attack last in round. Holy water does 2-8 points of damage.

Initial Question:

A. What is your PC's best course of action?

ANSWERS: Encounter 8
A. One tempting option is simply to run away! However, a properly equipped priest, even at first level, has a good chance in this encounter. The skeletons are 150 yards away, and will not be able to close in this round. (Notice they were not commanded to "Charge!") This means the PC will have one round to do anything he or she wants, free of attacks by the enemy. Depending upon the other spells available, the priest might well want to use this free round to cast her *bless* spell on herself. Alternately, she could attempt to turn the undead in this first round, thereby possibly avoiding combat entirely.

In this first run-through, assume your PC successfully casts the *bless* spell on herself in the first round. In this round, the skeletons close to within 30 yards, while the 2 zombies only come within 90 yards. Now answer these questions:

B. Is there any chance the PC's *bless* spell could fail at this point?

C. What are the effects of this spell?

ANSWERS: Encounter 8
B. The spell could fail if the character's Wisdom score is 12 or less. The chance that the spell will fail is given on Table 5: "Wisdom," PHB.
C. The *bless* spell, in this case, gives the character a +1 bonus to all attack rolls for the next 6 rounds. See the spell description in the PHB.

In the upcoming round, melee is possible—the skeletons attempt to close on your PC and attack. In this round, your priest will certainly try to turn

all the undead horde attacking her. Before she does, ask yourself these questions:

D. What is your PC's chance to turn the undead?

E. What are the results of success?

F. If the attempt fails, can another attempt be made?

ANSWERS: Encounter 8
D. The PC's chance to turn the undead can be found on Table 61: "Turning Undead," in the PHB. As a first level priest, your PC will turn the skeletons on a roll of 10 or higher on 1d20. The zombies may also be turned if the roll is 13 or higher.
E. The player rolls 1d20. If the result is 10 or greater, she then rolls 2d6. The resulting number is the number of undead that are turned. If the player rolled 13 or better on the 1d20, and rolled 9 or more on the 2d6, then one or both of the zombies are turned as well as all the skeletons. Notice that only one die roll is used for turning both types of undead, and the lower hit die undead are turned first.
F. No. Only one attempt to turn undead can be made in each encounter.

Now, roll initiative for the round. Roll for your PC and the skeletons; do not roll for the zombies, as they will move only after everything else has happened (zombies always move last). If the skeletons win the initiative, all close on your PC; four are able to actually attack. Resolve the attacks and record damage to your PC (if any).

If your priest wins the initiative, or is still alive after taking four attacks, have her make the attempt to turn the undead. (As you do, role-play your character forcefully proclaiming, "Begone, foul creatures of the night!" or some similar traditional, heroic balderdash.) Note the results on scratch paper.

Finally, continue the combat round by round until it ends. Note that a PC with movement greater than 6 may have a good chance to run away from the zombies, as they are quite slow and always lose the initiative.

9. FRIENDS CAN KILL YOU

Your PC is of lawful good alignment (at least for purposes of this encounter). She accompanies the rest of her group to a market place to buy supplies. While there; she notices the thief in the party picking the pocket of a passerby. Hmm...

There are two questions that the player should consider carefully. The answer to each effects the answer to the other:

A. What should your PC do?

B. What might be the results of not doing anything?

WIZARD ENCOUNTERS

First level wizards can be difficult to play, especially solo, because they have so few hit points (virtually any successful attack will kill them) and only one spell with which to attack or defend themselves. Beginning wizards must often use their wits and their ability to make themselves valuable to others in order to stay alive. On the other hand, even a single first level spell can be tremendously effective—if the wizard gets to cast it!

ANSWERS: Encounter 9

A. There are no "right" or "wrong" answers to this question, and no section of game rules that can provide an answer. The problem is simply this: your PC has seen someone who is probably a good friend (or at least a companion) commit an act which violates her moral and religious standards. Further, failure to uphold those standards may adversely affect your PC!

Only the player can make the decision as to what to do. Some possible things to consider are:

1. Asking the thief to return the stolen goods and ask forgiveness of the victim. This would satisfy the demands of both the *lawful* and good aspects of your character's alignment. The thief's confession and forgiveness would also make legal proceedings unnecessary.
2. Alternatively, the priest might ask the thief to allow her, the priest, to return what was stolen. This would somewhat slight the demands of law, which decrees that law-breakers should be punished.
3. The priest might make partial atonement for his friend's action by paying the victim back out of her own pocket. Again, law is slighted, but good is still partly served.
4. Turn the thief in. This will almost certainly sour relations between the PC and the rest of her party, particularly any thieves.
5. Make vigorous attempts to convert the thief to the cause of good, while limiting association with him to the minimum necessary to achieve lawful good goals.
6. Ignore the incident.

B. Violation of alignment is particularly serious for the priest class. Depending on the circumstances and the DM's ruling, the priest may find herself stripped of her priestly powers, saddened with a difficult quest as penance, or punished directly or indirectly by the chief deity and other believers of her own faith.

10. SNOOZE TIME

Your first level wizard PC is exploring an underground dungeon. He is in the middle of a long corridor, a mere 10 feet wide and extending about 100 feet in either direction. Without warning, four tough human bandits suddenly drop in, only 30 feet in front of him, through a trap door in the ceiling! Luckily, the wizard is not surprised. He has prepared one (your choice) of the following spells: *sleep* or *color spray*. Before casting the spell, ask yourself this:

- A. How will the decision to use a spell affect the initiative die roll?
- B. What will happen if your wizard chooses to cast the spell and loses the initiative?
- C. What other options does your wizard have?

ANSWERS: Encounter 10

A. The casting time for the spell is added to the initiative die roll. Since the low roll gets the initiative, spell casting reduces the odds of going first.

B. If the wizard chooses to use his spell, but does not win the initiative, the bandits will close and attack. Any successful hit by them will spoil the spell. Given that the wizard is only first level, any hit will also likely kill the wizard.

C. Several options exist. The simplest is to run away. If the wizard's movement rating is equal to the bandits' ratings, he already has a 30-foot head start. Another option is to *bluff*. The wizard could extend his arms in a menacing way, a gleam of anger in his eye, a lethal spell obviously about to strike his foes dead in their tracks. ("I am the great and powerful Oz..." — They're only bandits; they might fall for it.) Negotiation may be possible as well. Bandits are greedy; a smart character could play on this characteristic.

For now, let's assume your PC wizard does decide to cast his spell, and is lucky enough to win the initiative. The spell is cast. Note that unless these bandits are more powerful than they look, they gain no saving throw against either of these spells! In fact these are 1 hit die bandits. *Sleep* will hit 2d4 of them; *color spray* will get 1d6 of them. Make the die rolls. Then let any unaffected bandits close and make their one attack. (THAC0 20; Dmg 1d6). Now, what about that spell? Try answering this:

- C. Assume that all the bandits were affected by the spell. What is the possible outcome?

ANSWERS: Encounter 10
C. Both of the spells listed have the same ultimate effect. Your wizard can now do what he wants to these bandits. They are unconscious, and as such, can be automatically slain if he so desires.

Whether or not your wizard survived this mock combat, you should now see that if the wizard were part of a group that included one or two fighters, he would be a powerful figure indeed! They could protect him until the spell was cast.

II. SHOOTING BLANKS

Your wizard slays bandits in the above encounter and continues merrily on his way. He gets no more than 40 feet, however, when two of the late, lamented bandits' best friends appear—one at each end of the corridor. Yikes!

A. What would you have your character do? How long will it be before the wizard can cast another spell?

ANSWERS: Encounter 11
A. There is no right or wrong answer. The dilemma is explained by the answer to the second question—your wizard can't cast a spell again until he's had a good night's rest and spent at least 10 minutes in concentrated study to memorize another spell. Here again, the wizard might try to run a bluff. Whatever he does, he should keep his enemies separated—have him move toward one of them as quickly as possible. A real fast talker might even be able to get behind the approaching bandit! Of course, the other option would be to find some way up through the trap door that the first four bandits dropped down through!

A GROUP ENCOUNTER

This encounter is for several player characters of different classes. Running it requires a DM.

The encounter is quite simple. The PCs are placed in a completely enclosed, very large space: a room with stone walls, ceiling, and floor measuring 100 feet by 100 feet with a 10 foot high ceiling. The DM has a party of NPCs who are exact duplicates of the PCs in every respect except clothing, facial appearance, and, obviously, thought processes. Characters from only one group can leave the room alive. The NPCs are lined up about 10 feet apart near the center of one wall; the PCs are lined up identically near the center of the opposite wall.

As DM's are fond of saying, "*What do you want to do?*"



CHAPTER FIVE: A FIRST ADVENTURE

This chapter is for the eyes of the DM only. If you plan to play a character in this adventure, do not read beyond this point!

SETTING AND SYNOPSIS

The PCs meet one another for the first time in the small rural village of Boremium. This community is located in High Vale in the League of the Minotaurs, on the trail running south from Jalum. The village sits at the point where the trail from Jalum intersects the trail to the Pathar Frontier, near a bridge over the Lenika River. The exact location can easily be found by comparing the DM's maps in this module to the map of the League and Armach in the *Time of the Dragons* boxed set.

Boremium is alive with rumors and its citizens are discontent. Most of the frontier garrisons of the League have been removed to the threatened border with Thenol. As a consequence, High Vale has suffered, as creatures once subdued in the New Mountains and the High Vale Range have returned to their old haunts and their old habits.

As the PCs are learning to know one another and gathering information from the locals, a raid sweeps through Boremium! A mixture of humans, goblins, and undead ride through the village, burning buildings, slaying innocents, and providing the PCs with their first taste of actual combat. Because of the PCs' intervention, the raiders quickly retire toward the Darcika Woods to the west.

The PCs are given the opportunity to set off into the forest, seeking the raiders' base camp and attempting to gather information about them for the imperial government. Further enticement for the PCs is provided by legends concerning a long abandoned fortress from the time of Aurim hidden within the wooded boundaries of Darcika.

The PCs can easily locate the site. It did serve as a base for the raiders, but most of them have since dispersed. All that remain are a few priests of Usa from across the nearby Armach border, a special guard, and a few of the undead commanded by the priests.

If the PCs can defeat these villains, they can learn the secret purpose behind the raid on Boremium, and gain a clue as to the location of a fabulous treasure hidden somewhere in the Conquered Lands...

DM's BACKGROUND

The raiders are followers of the evil god Usa, (known as Hiteh to the folk of Armach). The Usa cult, though driven underground, is growing rapidly in Armach. It is now powerful enough to supply priests and men for pillaging raids into the

neighboring lands of the League.

These raids are being encouraged by Bishop Trandamere, who is ruler of the kingdom of Thenol in all but name. Recently, Armach and the League have settled their own hostilities, and the League's border legions have been concentrated in defensive positions on the Thenol frontier.

Trandamere, who is turning Thenol into a virtual theocracy under the priests of Hiteh, finds it easy to influence the priests of Usa in nearby Armach. Having Armach raiders threatening High Vale may be reason enough for the League to withdraw troops from the Thenol border. While the government of Armach will certainly protest its innocence of any knowledge of such raids, the skirmishes may have the added benefit for Trandamere of driving a wedge between Armach and the League.

THE VILLAGE OF BOREMIUM

Boremium was never more than a simple village, but until recently it was quite a prosperous one. The farmlands of the region are fertile; the forest to the west is a good source of lumber, and the High Vale Range did support considerable mining activity. Boremium's location near the only major trail and bridge across the Lenika River made it a natural center for industry and trade.


The DM's map shows the center of the village. The imperial quarters, which serve as a residence for visiting imperial officials, is a stone villa in the minotaur style. The remaining buildings are made of wood, including the local arena, which consists of little more than a flat field surrounded by wooden bleacher style seats and a wooden wall. The market booths are in a large wooden barn, open on both sides, the barn divided into stalls which are rented by merchants passing through the village to hawk their wares. The map shows a few individual businesses where the PCs might care to trade; prices here are only slightly above average, but selection of merchandise is somewhat limited.

The mining and lumber trades continue here, although increased raids on work parties by bands of goblins, bandits, ogres, and other fierce mountain denizens are driving off the work force. As the work force shrinks, so does the trade on which the village depends.

GETTING STARTED

Set the positions of the moons of Krynn according to the instructions in the RBT. Have the PCs begin in the tavern room of the inn at Boremium. The time is dusk; the season is early summer. Chance





has the PCs sitting close to one another; conversation among them should arise naturally. Have each PC explain how he or she came to be in Boremium at this time. If some players have difficulty making up a suitable background story, here are some suggestions:

1. Warrior characters have heard rumors of trouble in High Vale. It's common knowledge that the garrison troops have all but been removed, and the imperial presence in the area is very weak. The activities of goblins, ogres and the like would naturally draw young warriors, eager to prove their mettle, and anxious to turn a coin or two.

2. One or more wizards have heard a tale (although false) that the fabulous spellbook of the Third High Wizard of the old empire of Aurim lies in a ruin somewhere near this tiny village. How it came to be here is a mystery that dates back to the Cataclysm.

3. Thieves have heard that mining for iron ore has decreased in the High Vale Range, while miners turn their attention to a newly-discovered, potentially far more valuable mining opportunity. The combination of a possible gold or silver find along with the lack of imperial presence in the area should be more than enough to attract any sane thief.

4. Priests have wandered here randomly, directed here by strange dreams, or simply felt a vague "calling" toward this region, where there is increased suffering because of the activity of evil creatures from the mountains.

When the PCs have become semi-acquainted, or when one of them asks more about their surroundings, provide a brief description of the village (they've seen it on their way in) and go to Encounter 1. In the encounters that follow, boxed text is to be *read aloud* to the players.

ENCOUNTERS

I. AT THE INN

The inn shows signs of fading prosperity. It is crowded enough, though most of the customers are drinking and eating lightly. The innkeeper, a thin man with a pinched look about his face, flutters from the kitchen to the main room and back, constantly inquiring of the customers if everything is alright, and what more he can bring them. The dishes, obviously once quite fine, are now chipped and cracked.

In all, there are some 30 customers jammed into the room, not counting the PCs. One patron of note is the huge minotaur who sits at the head of the large table by the western wall, enjoying the fire and the deference of his 4 well-dressed human companions. This is Balakas, the local administrator, who reports

to the provincial governor himself.

The bulk of the customers are local farmers. Two dwarves sit among a group of human miners; they are enjoying a brief holiday from their work in the mines of the High Vale Range.

One man sits alone at the table nearest the eastern wall. He wears a plain brown cloak over a white linen shirt, plain brown breeches, and simple soft boots. This is Arnaulf, a priest of Mislaxa. Arnaulf is not as fanatical as the priestesses of Ildamar in nearby Armach, though he knows Mislaxa as the Earthspirit and worships her as such. Arnaulf politely but firmly declines contact with anyone who approaches him.

PCs who listen to the conversation around them, or who engage the locals in conversation, can hear the following rumors. Whether or not each of them is true is indicated after the text.

1. Goblins, hobgoblins, ogres, and other creatures, not identifiable, are raiding the mines in the High Vale Range. Many miners have left the mines for other work, and operations are suffering as a consequence. (True)

2. The lumber trade has slowed, for much the same reason. (True)

3. A huge dragon was seen winging high in the night sky not more than a week ago. It was headed toward the High Vale Range. (Utterly false)

4. A mad trapper from deep in the forests was in the village a week ago. He said some hideous ritual was taking place among the ruins of the old Aurim fortress in the forest west of the village. (Partly true—there is an old fortress there, but no ritual.)

5. Business in the village is slow. (True)

6. It is said that the ruins of that old fortress contain a fabulous treasure, though none of those who know the site well have ever found it. (False.)

The general atmosphere in the inn is friendly toward strangers—even toward Balakas. This village makes much of its living off of the travelers and merchants who come here, and it would be against their best interests for the locals to treat anyone with anything but courtesy.

When the PCs have become acquainted and picked up some of these rumors, move on to Encounter 2.

2. RAID!

Suddenly, a thunder of hoofbeats can be heard, and seconds later, a mixture of guttural and shrill whoops and cries pierce the early evening air. The front door of the inn crashes open loudly. A man, who looks for all the world like a screaming lunatic, stands in the doorway, a bloody spear in one hand, and a flask of oil in the other!

Usa's raid has hit town. The raiders are divided into three groups:

Group A

Clerics of Usa (Human) (3): AC 5 (Scale mail and shield); MV 12; C 1; hp 6, 7, 8; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8(S-M) or 1d12(L) (Longsword); AL NE; ML 13. Spells prepared - #1: *bless*; #2: *curse*; #3: *putrefy food and drink*.

Usa Fanatics (4): AC 10; MV 12; F 0; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6(S-M) or 1d8(L) (Spear); AL NE; ML 11.

Skeletons (12): AC 7; MV 12; HD 1; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; AL N. Not affected by *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, and cold based spells. Take half damage from sharp or edged weapons. Holy water causes 2-8 points of damage.

Zombies (4): AC 8; MV 6; HD 2; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; AL N. Not affected by *sleep*, *charm*, *hold* and cold based spells. Always attack last in round. Holy water does 2-8 points of damage.

The 3 clerics and the 4 fanatics are mounted on light horses, AC 7; MV 24; HD 2; #AT 2; Dmg 1-4/1-4; THAC0 18; Size (L). The horses themselves do not attack unless cornered.

Group B

Group B consists of 20 Usa fanatics (as above).

Group C

Goblins (20): AC 6; MV 6; HD 1-1; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; AL LE; Size S; ML 11.

The leader of the raid is **Eran**, a cleric of Usa: AC 4 (banded mail); MV 12; C 3; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (S-M) or 1d12 (L) (Long sword); STR 11; DEX 10; CON 9; INT 13; WIS 15; CHR 14. Spells prepared: (1st) *bless*, *curse*, *putrefy food and drink*, *detect snares and pits*; (2nd) *aid*, *silence 15' radius*.

Eran is mounted on a light horse. He rides between Group B and Group C.

Group A's task is to set fire to the inn and stables, randomly slaughter a few people, and withdraw. Group B's task is to set fire to business buildings, deface the imperial quarters if possible, and cover the withdrawal of the other two groups. Group C's task is to torch the local arena and randomly slaughter villagers.

Group B entered the village, whooping and screaming, only after Groups A and C were already well into the heart of town and in position to strike.

When the encounter begins for the PCs, one of the fanatics with Group A has dismounted and entered the inn. He intends to hurl his oil, step outside, and remount. Clerics #1 and #3 are just outside the inn



door with 8 skeletons and the 4 zombies. As soon as the man withdraws, the clerics will direct the undead inside to slaughter all they can reach. If at all possible, cleric #3 will enter the inn long enough to cast his *putrefy food and drink* spell.


Meanwhile, cleric #2 with 4 skeletons is breaking in the window of the back guest room and working his way systematically down the hall, killing anything in his path.

The mounted fanatics of Group A are to guard the front of the building and help the clerics to escape, if need be. Neither they nor anyone else cares what happens to the skeletons and zombies.

While the attack on the inn takes place, Groups B and C are simultaneously striking their objectives. Group B is to cover the withdrawal, particularly of the goblins, who are on foot.

Of the people in the inn, all will panic and attempt to escape, with the exception of Arnaulf. Most run upstairs, trying to either reach the roof, or even jump out a window. Arnaulf tries to move himself to safety, and at the same time carefully observes the actions of everyone else. His chief concern is to keep himself from being revealed as a priest. As a last resort to protect himself, he will attempt to turn undead, use his prepared spell, and then enter combat, even though he has no weapon.

Arnaulf: AC 10; MV 12; C 1; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1-2 (unarmed combat only); AL NG; STR 11, DEX 9, CON 10, INT 11, WIS 13, CHR 9. Spell prepared: *bless*.



The PCs may take whatever actions they desire; however, with everyone else trying to escape, they will have to either attack the escaping villagers (treat them as zero-level NPCs) to clear a path for themselves, or turn and face the raiders. If they can fight their way outside, they may well come into contact and combat with other groups of raiders. In all, the raid will last only 15 rounds. If the raiding force has not fled prior to that because of failed morale checks, they voluntarily attempt to withdraw at the end of that time.

The raiding force will retreat out of the village, across the trail, and head due west into the forest, making for the ruined fortress.

Any goblin prisoners taken by the PCs will gladly talk in exchange for their lives, or a reasonable belief that they will be spared. The goblins know little, other than that their little band was sent down from the mountains by the headman of their village to aid in the raid. They came mainly for the promise of whatever booty they could lay their hands on, which was not much. Human fanatic or priest prisoners will sooner die than give any information.

The goblins have an average of 8 silver pieces each on them. None of the other raiders carry any money. Should Eran have been slain in the combat, PCs can find on his body, in addition to his armor and sword, a scroll of *protection from undead* (carried as a last resort in case he failed control his undead servants).

3. AFTER THE RAID

What happens after the raid depends largely on what the PCs did during the raid. If they actively fought the raiding force, they will be sought out by Balakas the Minotaur as soon as the fighting is over.

Balakas is in a deep fix. He cannot send for imperial troops to pursue the raiders; at the moment, there are none to spare. On the other hand, failure to respond will weaken the prestige of the government (and the minotaur race) in the eyes of the villagers. Complaints might be sent up the chain of command; Balakas might be made to look bad.

Balakas' solution lies with the PCs. What he needs is information about the raiders, and perhaps some prisoners. If the PCs agree to provide this, he will reward them handsomely. Balakas will begin by offering the equivalent of 500 gp in steel (he can be bargained up to 1,000 if the PCs try). This is a lump sum for the party, not for each PC!

If the PCs are slow to figure it out, Balakas will even suggest that the raiders might have based themselves in the ruins of the abandoned fort, in the woods to the west of the village. Any man of the village can give general directions to the ruin.

If the PCs did not try to fight the raiders, or behaved in some other, equally disgraceful way, Balakas will publicly announce the reward he is

offering for information and prisoners. The PCs can then volunteer for the job.

Arnauf will come to visit the PCs shortly after the raiders leave. If any were wounded in the fighting, he will offer 1 *potion of healing*. He will also urge the party to take up Balakas' offer of a reward. Further, if the *potion of healing* is not used after the first encounter, he will let the PCs have it anyway, provided they undertake Balakas' mission.

4. TO THE RUINS

To the west of the village, the ground rises in a series of low hills with rocky outcroppings, marked by several high ridges. For several hundred yards, the forest is somewhat sparse, having been repeatedly harvested. However, at a distance of about 600 to 800 yards, the forest becomes much more dense, the underbrush much thicker, and ground rises more steeply. Still, it is less than a mile to the ruined fort, and no encounters should occur during the journey.

The raiders left a trail that is not too difficult to follow. However, while all of the undead and goblin tracks stop at the fortress, all of the hoof prints continue on past it.

5. ERAN'S BAND

When they plunged into the woods, the survivors of Eran's band of raiders divided into two groups. Surviving priests, goblins, and undead made for the ruined fortress; surviving fanatics accompanied them to the fortress, then made their way to their homes in Armach. Eran and his small crew don't even need their horses; the goblins have agreed to supply their short term needs.

Unless the PCs followed hot on the heels of the raiders (difficult, since the PCs probably lack horses) only the survivors of the goblins, undead and clerics will be at the ruins when the PCs arrive.

Surveying the fortress, the PCs will see that the term "ruin" indeed applies. The great fortress, built before the Cataclysm, is barely standing at all. The fortress was once a triangular-shaped stone structure some 40 feet high and 100 yards long on each side. Each corner of the triangle had a high tower with battlements. Now, the towers and most of the walls lie in heaps of stone rubble. Vegetation has overgrown the interior of the ruin. In places, it seems as if the earth itself is determined to destroy the ancient structure, for huge blocks of granite jut up from the ground at odd angles beneath and between the tumbled blocks.

If the PCs carefully search the ruins, they will eventually discover, at the spot marked on the DM's map, a small cavern opening. This is so small that human size or larger characters must crawl to enter it. The passageway slopes down very gradually, but after about 20 feet, it opens onto a stone stairway.

The stairway is of new construction—built within the last 10 years. Any dwarven characters in the party should be able to recognize this.

At the foot of the stairs stand two large wooden doors, covered with bronze plating. The doors are extremely heavy, but not locked. Behind the doors lies the first temple to Usa ever built within this region.

The following descriptions are keyed to the DM's map:

1. Main Temple Room: As soon as the doors swing open, the PCs are confronted by all of the remaining undead from the raid on Boremium. Eran has posted them here as silent sentinels. Their instructions are simple: they are to attack anyone or anything that attempts to enter. They cannot be surprised, since they have nothing to do but watch for the doors to open. If the PCs somehow managed to destroy all of the undead from the raid, the room is empty when they enter. (It is a just reward for a job well done.)

The main temple room is not yet complete. The walls are of bare stone, devoid of decoration. However, at the far end of the room is a statue of Usa. Priest class characters will immediately recognize this god, not as Usa, but as Hiteh. An empty altar stone lies before the statue, but is perfectly clean, as it has not yet been used for any sacrificial rites.

Three rounds after the PCs open the doors, or on the first round after the undead are defeated, a bellows of rage sounds from the area marked as room 2 on the DM's map. From behind the blue silk curtain a minotaur emerges, a huge axe gripped tightly in his hands. He wastes no time in charging at the PCs, seeking out obvious spell casters as his preferred targets.

This minotaur is a former arena fighter, one of the few of his race to convert to the new faith. Now, he serves the priesthood of Usa however he can: in this case, as guardian of this new, secret temple.

Minotaur guard: AC 4 (bronze plate mail); MV 9; F 5; THACO 16; #AT 1 (3/2 if specialization is used); Dmg 1d8; Size L; AL LE; STR 17; DEX 10; CON 13; INT 9; WIS 10; CHR 8.

As the minotaur charges, any remaining priests from the raid, including Eran, also enter the battle. Their spells are as listed in Encounter 2, minus any used in that encounter which they have not had time to regain. As all these NPCs are fanatical followers of Usa, they fight to the death.

2. Priests' Quarters: This large, unfinished room contains little of interest. There are four cots used by the three priests and the minotaur, trunks containing common clothing, and the combined treasure of the priests, which amounts to only 87 pieces of silver.

3. Eran's Quarters: These are the unfinished quarters for the high priest of the temple, currently being used by Eran. Here the PCs can find a decent bed, several changes of common clothing, and a bag containing 600 gp worth of steel. Also here are Eran's armor, sword, dagger, and the scroll of *protection from undead*. There is also a small writing table with quill, ink, and vellum. Lying beneath the plain papers on the table is a brief letter. The text reads:

My Dear Son Eran:

I call you a son in the faith, for he whom you know as Usa I too know well.

Your efforts on behalf of our friends in Armach, I know well. May Usa reward you generously!

And, I think he will. Once your work in High Vale is complete, you must visit me. I have obtained information concerning a great discovery in the Steamwall Mountains, and would reward your fine work by allowing you to take part in a small expedition I am planning.

May the blessings of Usa-Hiteh be with you.

Trandamere

6. FINAL NOTES

The discovery of Trandamere's letter ends the adventure within this module. Calculate experience points for each of the player characters, and let them divide up the spoils as they see fit. Several loose ends are left deliberately, so the DM can have several things to develop in his own campaign. These include:

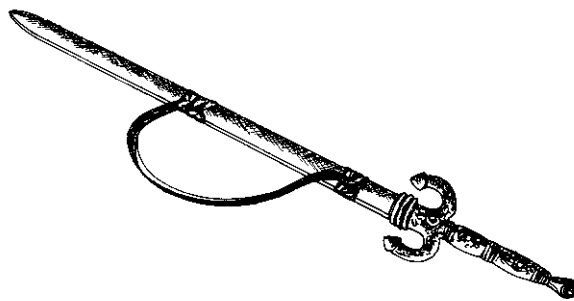
1. The continuing problems in the area from the High Vale Range to Boremium. Many adventures could be set here, simply cleaning up the area, given the lack of imperial troops.

2. The PCs report to Balakas. What they do (or don't) report to him could make for an interesting relationship, now and in the future.

3. This newly-constructed temple is obviously not yet finished. Eran is not sufficiently powerful to be building it, therefore who is? What further plans does this higher priest of Usa have for this region?

4. What of Trandamere's expedition? What more could the PCs learn of it?

5. Other directions that the players will probably suggest to the DM.





GENERIC CHARACTER SHEET

Character _____ Player _____
Class _____ Race _____ Level _____ Alignment _____
Sex _____ Homeland _____

ABILITIES

Movement

SAVING THROWS

Hit Points

Armor

AC

P/P

☐

R/W/S

☐

Pet/Poly

☐

Breath

☐

Spells

☐

Proficiencies

Modifier

Skills

Languages

THAC0

Attacks/Round _____

Age _____

Ht. _____

Wt. _____

Racial Abilities

Class Abilities

Racial Limitations

Class Limitations

Current Funds

Equipment, General

Weapons

Speed

Damage

[illegible]

Carried

Magic Items

SPELLS

Current Level Limits:

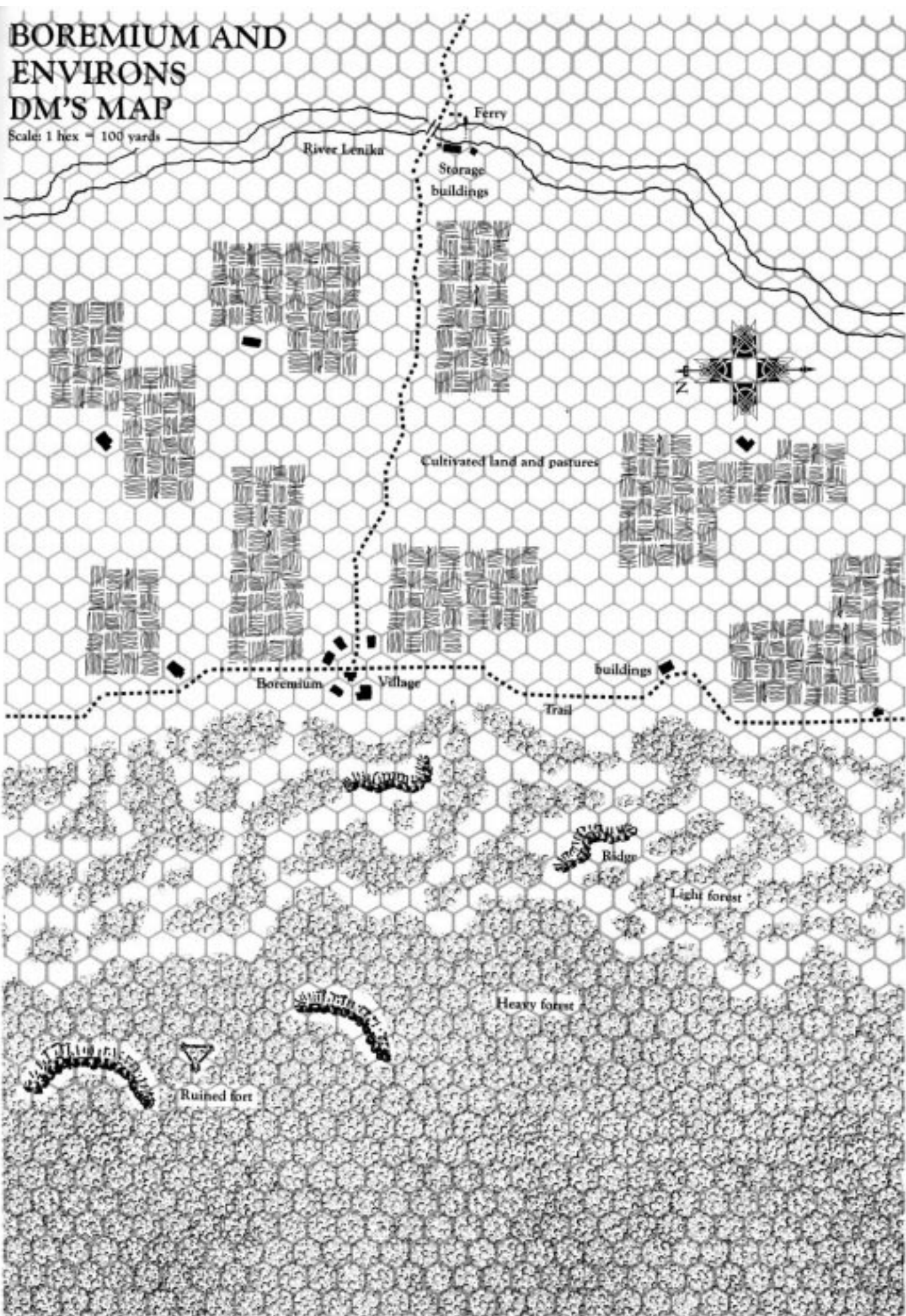
Current Level Limits:

SPELLS PREPARED and/or Scrolls

[illegible]

BOREMIUM AND ENVIRONS DM'S MAP

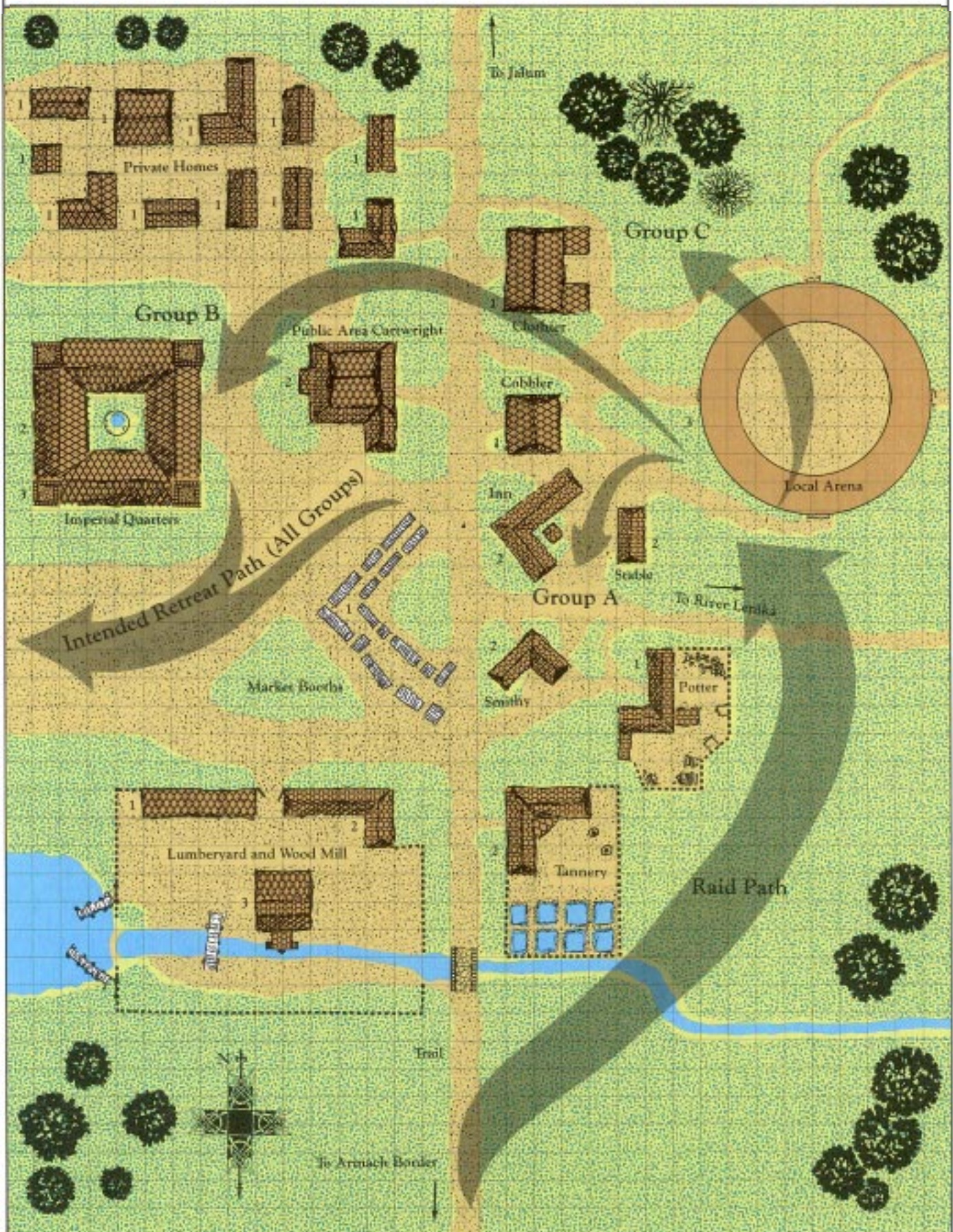
Scale: 1 hex = 100 yards



DM's Map Boremium Village

Scale: 1 square = 20 feet

Numbers on buildings show height of structures in stories

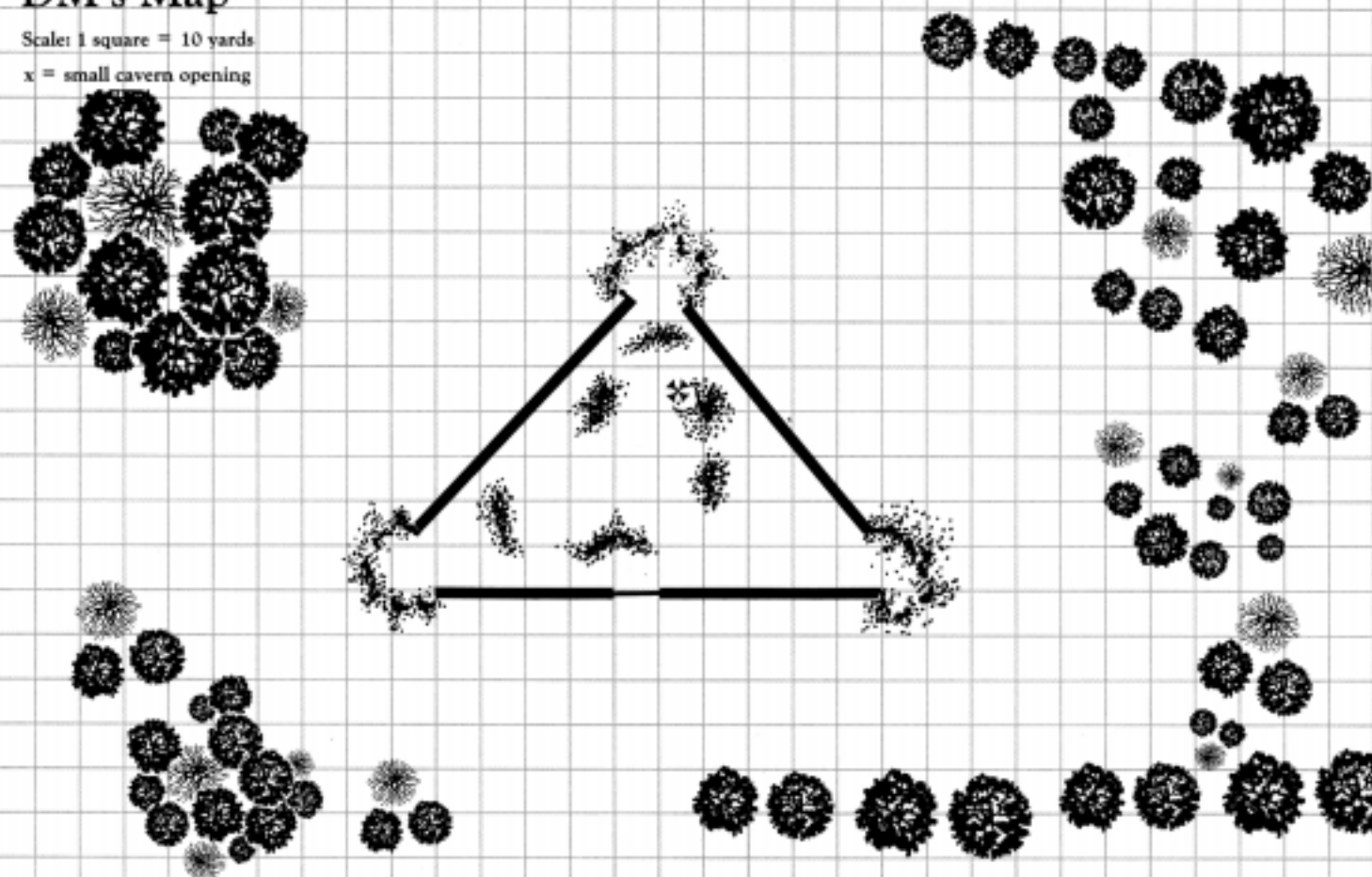


Ruined Fortress

DM's Map

Scale: 1 square = 10 yards

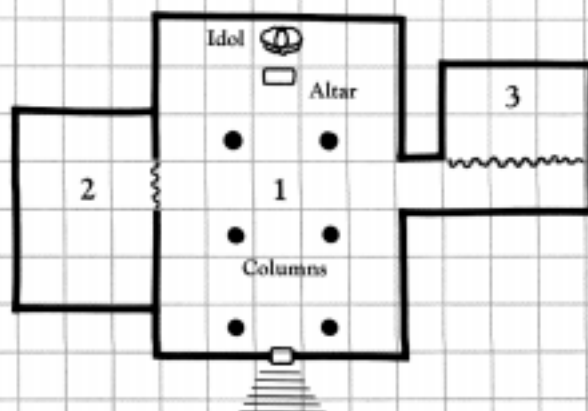
x = small cavern opening



Temple Area

DM's Map, Chapter 5, Encounter 5

Scale: 1 square = 10 feet





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BY MARK ACRES

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